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THE TRAMP.

It is often said that never before, since the beginning of history, have tramps been so numerous and so threatening to the peace and prosperity of society as at present. But a careful examination will show that this is an error; a thorough study of history will prove that the unproductive or tramp class, was never less than at present. The name deceives us; we do not take into consideration the fact that the class we now call tramps, was formerly known under different names, and embraced many which at first thought, one would not think of including with the tramps of to-day. Some of those that I shall attempt to prove to belong to the non-productive class are known in history under titles of honor and respectability. But do they deserve the place they occupy? If the work they have done for society be but coolly estimated, it will be found that they have been only an encumbrance to the onward march of society. But to show that the tramp is no modern growth, we need only refer to the "Lazarus" of ancient Rome. They were perhaps of the lowest kind, dependent upon the bounty of the state for their food. An element ever ready to be bought and sold, ever ready to be made tools of by designing demagogues. They were the supporters of Nero in his reign of blood; and finally even the tyrant himself, had to make his acts conform to their will and pleasure. They had no houses, neither did they pretend to do any work for their own support. They were ignorant, idle and vicious; ready for carnage, murder and blood at the slightest provocation, or without any provocation. The cause of their existence will be found about the same as that of the tramps now. But before attempting to give any reason for the existence of the great evil, I wish to notice some other classes which I will place in the same list with the tramps though they may have degenerated so low in honor and character. Nay, some of them may even be men of noble personal character, and yet only worthy to be classed with those who hinder progress. First among these I shall mention the ancient army. This view does not necessarily include all soldiers; but must include all those who made a business of war and travelled from one country to another, ready to sell their services to any prince who had a real or fancied grievance to redress, or who wished to extend his power. Some may say that they are not to be named in the same class as the tramp. But have they not the same characteristics, the same distinctive influences upon society? Neither have any high morals, any lofty ideals. Neither do anything to advance the world, or

themselves in intellectual or material prosperity. The one may be more ragged, dirty and debased; but the other is more bloody and destructive. There is nothing connected with the hired soldier which is in any sense, ennobling or elevating. Every attribute, every feature of his character is calculated to degrade. If this view be correct (and is it not?) what are mercenaries but a mighty travelling army of tramps? The soldier of to-day stands upon a different plane. He employs only a small portion of his time in the active duties of war; most of his time is spent in useful labor. Yet even now, the large standing armies of Europe partake more or less of the attributes of the tramp. Their existence cannot be defended upon any reasonable grounds. To leave this class, and cast our eyes along the ages of the past, we see thousands, yes perhaps millions of men, many of them noble in some senses of the word, yet all having the one great stamp which marks the tramp, the stamp of idleness, and non-productiveness. Europe during some of these years has fairly teemed with this class which may well be considered with the tramp of to-day. I refer to the monks, withdrawn from the world, crowded into monasteries, doing almost nothing for themselves and even less for humanity, where can you place them, if not with the tramp class? What name will you give them if not the name of tramp. This statement must not be understood to include all monks, for there are those among them who left nothing undone to relieve the suffering, and distresses of humanity. But many so many did not. Oh, if they had only turned their whole mind and strength to the upbuilding of society, in education, in wealth, in morals, how much further advanced in all these respects might we not be at the present? These are some of the most prominent classes that belong to the tramp element, not all by any means, but enough to show that we are advancing, to prove that our civilization, though cursed with much that is bad, with a large element that does nothing whatever to aid in the progress of mankind, is firmer, and is built upon a surer basis than any that has preceded it. But let us consider briefly the causes that lead to the production of the tramp. Two causes, it seems to me will account for all the classes I have mentioned except one. That one, the monk class arose from an abnormal condition of religious society during the dark ages; and our civ- way; but the light is breaking and in one or two generations more, these men will cease to withdraw themselves from the world. They will stay with it and help fight the battles which humanity demands at our hands. With this one exception, it will be found that two great causes continually operate to produce the tramp-

The first is the personal habits of the individual man. The votaries of idleness will soon find themselves carried along in the sluggish stream leading to a wandering homeless life, to poverty and death, to death without a companion or a friend. Dissatisfaction with present circumstances, an uncontrolled desire for change, a longing after fame and wealth without making the required exertion, are elements of character which lead one directly, and unless curbed, into the ranks of the tramp. The social evils, intemperance with all its destructive powers help swell the tide that is now bearing so threateningly upon our shores. But the second and the greatest cause which nourishes the tramp is one of society, and of nations. An evil that is more common and more widespread in its effects than any other. War, even the most just is demoralizing and degrading. The evils resulting from it reach out in all directions, embrace all employments and all classes. Now some one may say, true, war is a terrible misfortune to befall a nation and a people; but is it not a mere fancy that it tends to the production of tramps? No, for does not almost every effect flowing from it, tend to their production? As we have seen an army itself partakes somewhat of the elements which make the tramp. But to sum up rapidly, we find that war breaks up all settled habits of life; takes men from their ordinary employments; introduces a desire for speculation; brings great wealth into the hands of a few, and thus has a tendency to produce a tramp class. During its continuance fortunes are easily made, hence at its close, when life has settled into its normal condition, men are unwilling to work without war profits. They form a habit of wandering from place to place with the object of getting work; such a life is only a prelude to the life of a tramp. A heavy debt is contracted; hence taxes weigh burdensomely upon all classes; but as the poor feel it most they become restless and dissatisfied, and attempt by continual change to better their condition. The currency becomes debased; and here again the poor have to suffer most, since they cannot take advantage of circumstances like the rich. Thus every thing connected with war tends to the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, hence to the production of two classes the rich and the poor followed immediately by the tramp. An indirect proof that the tramp is the outgrowth of war is this; the tramp was not found in this country before the war. What other cause can be assigned for his sudden appearance. If it is true that the war was the direct cause of them in this country, why will not the same cause account for their existence in Europe, both past and present? To conclude, if we find the tramp in the arm,